DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 324 997 HE 023 653

TITLE	African-American Men and Higher Education in Maryland. Addressing the Future. Findings and Recommendations of the Task Force To Address the Decline in Enrollment and Graduation of the Black Male from Institutions of Higher Education.
INSTITUTION	NAACP, Rockville, MD. Montgomery County Branch.
PUB DATE	Jan 90
NOTE	64p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Montgomery County Maryland Branch of the NAACP, P.O. Box 2165, Rockville, MD 20852 (1-49 copies, $7.00 ea., more than 49, $5.00 ea.).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Academic Persistence; *Black Students; *College Admission; College Graduates; Data Analysis; Dropout Research; *Educational Attainment; Elementary Secondary Education; Enrollment; Higher Education; *Males; Preschool Children; Research Methodology; Student Educational Objectives; Trend Analysis
IDENTIFIERS	*African Americans; *Maryland

ABSTRACT

Original data is presented which examines some of the factors that contribute to the low number of African-American males receiving baccalaureate degrees in Maryland. The data represents findings which resulted from research by an appointed task force; a "Town Meeting" of students, parents, and other interested adults; consultation with persons who have expert knowledge of the subject; and a specially designed and administered survey of 955 students who are expected to graduate either in 1990 or in the 1992-93 school year from Baltimore City Public Schools (n=866) or Montgomery County Public Schools (n=89). The report is divided into two separate parts. Part 1 presents an overview of state data directly related to the issue of black male college enrollments. Part 2 examines cross cutting issues and school related factors, both elementary and secondary, which have a direct impact on college attendance of African-American males. Among the questions under investigation are: (1) do the current practices of academic tracking contribute to the low college enrollments? (2) what happens to a child prior to his entry into the formal schooling process? and (3) what happens to a child during the formal school years outside of school? Contains 30 references. (GLR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED324997

ADDRESSING THE FUTURE

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN

IN

HIGHER EDUCATION

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE

TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS THE DECLINE IN ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATION OF THE BLACK MALE FROM INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

HE 023 653

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
MARYLAND

JANUARY 1990

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Montgomery County MD Branch, NAACP

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ADDRESSING THE FUTURE

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN MARYLAND

FINDINGS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE

TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS THE DECLINE IN ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATION OF THE BLACK MALE FROM INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
MARYLAND

JANUARY 1990

Table of Contents

Task Force Members i

Preface iii

Foreword vi

Statement of the Problem 1

Executive Summary 4

PART ONE

Black College Enrollments in the State of Maryland 14

Fewer Black Freshmen Means Fewer Black Male Graduates 20

The Future Education Plans of Maryland High School Graduates 21

The Military Plans of Maryland High School Students 23

The Community College Route 24

Trends in Retention Within and Graduation from Campus First Attended 26

Financial Aid 29

PART TWO

Cross Cutting Issues 35

Survey Findings 38

Town Meeting: Interactive Groups 41

Special Programs and Efforts in the State of Maryland 45

Afterword 48

Endnotes 49

Task Force to Address the Decline In Enrollment and Graduation of the Black Male From Institutions of Higher Education

Chairman

John W. Diggs, Ph.D.
Director
Division of Extramural Activities
National Institute of Allergy
and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health

Members

Lillian M. Beard, M.D.
Private Practitioner of
Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine
and Associate Clinical Professor
The George Washington University
School of Medicine

Mary E. Cothran, Ph.D.
Director
Office of Minority Student
Education
University of Maryland
at College Park

Richard English, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Social Work
Howard University

Leon Grant, D.D.
Pastor
Mount Calvary Baptist Church

E. Marie Johnson, Ph.D.
Pastor
Scotland A.M.E. Zion Church

Isiah Leggett, J.D.*
Vice President
Montgomery County Council

Rufus W. McKinney, J.D.*
Vice President for National Public
Affairs
Southern California Gas Company
Washington, DC Operations

Frank Morris, Ph.D.
Dean
The Graduate School
Morgan State University

James L. Robinson
Director of Child Advocacy
Administration of Children and Youth
United States Department of Education

Joshua Smith*
Chairman of the Board
and Chief Executive Officer
The Maxima Corporation

Sylvia Johnson, Ph.D.
Professor
School of Education
Howard University

Paul Vance, Ph.D.
Deputy Superintendent
Montgomery County Public Schools

Trudye Johnson
Director
Montgomery County Department
of Recreation

Secretariat

John William Smith
Special Assistant to the Chairman
United States House of Representatives
Committee on Education and Labor

Ex Officio

Joseph A. Hawkins
Teacher Specialist
Department of Educational
Accountability
Montgomery County Public Schools

George B. Thomas, Ph.D.
Manager
Historically Black Colleges and
Universities Program
Federal Aviation Administration

Expert Community Consultant

Arthur L. Williams
Chief
Requirements Branch - Conventional
United States Concepts Analysis Agency

*Unable to participate in Task Force deliberations due to unavoidable scheduling conflicts and prior commitments.

Preface

In October 1988, Roscoe Nix, President of the Montgomery County Maryland Branch of the NAACP, appointed a fifteen (15) member Blue Ribbon Task Force to address the decline in African-American male enrollment and graduation from institutions of higher learning. This situation has reached epidemic proportion and is a national crisis.

The emergency resolution authorizing this action was consistent with the historical significance the NAACP has always placed on quality education. Traditionally, the NAACP has felt that education is one of the critical civil rights issues affecting blacks in the United States. Indeed, education is the key to good jobs, quality housing and political influence.

The Task Force held its initial meeting in November 1988, and held meetings on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month thereafter. The first two Task Force meetings were devoted to outlining specific goals and objectives which were identified as such:

- identification of factors contributing to the decline in enrollment and graduation rates of African-American males from institutions of higher learning;
- development of strategies and recommendations to address the decline in the enrollment and graduation rates of African-American males;
- preparation of a comprehensive report based on Task Force activities and outlining its findings, conclusions and recommendations; and
- the release of the final report to public officials, community organizations, community leaders and members of the general community in a public meeting.

The Task Force next outlined a specific set of activities designed to achieve the identified goals and objectives. These included:

- collection and study of relevant literature on the education of the African-American male and the decline in their enrollment and graduation rates from institutions of higher education;
- development and administration of appropriate surveys and questionnaires to targeted student populations, and a subsequential analysis of the results;
- exploration and examination of the impact and importance of public school education (pre-kindergarten through high school graduation) on the future or failure of African-American students in their enrollment and graduation from institutions of higher learning;

- convening meetings with noted experts to gain additional insight into the exact nature, probable causes and extent of the problem;

- sponsorship of a Town Meeting for community and citizen input;

- evaluation and analysis of all materials and data collected by the Task Force; and

- meetings with appropriate public officials and community leaders to discuss and recommend specific actions to address the problems.

During the next few months, members of the Task Force collected and discussed existing data from local, state and national studies. In March 1989, the Task Force convened a special meeting with experts in the field of eduction, to gain a broader perspective of the problem. Mr. Roscoe Nix, members of the Task Force and the following noted experts attended the meeting:

- Dr. Elias Blake, Director
  Division of Higher Education Policy Research
  Howard University
  Washington, D.C.

- Dr. Samuel L. Meyers, Jr., Director
  Afro-American Studies Program
  University of Maryland
  College Park, Maryland

- Dr. Reginald Wilson, Director
  Minority Programs
  American Council on Education
  Washington, D.C.

The Task Force survey instruments were administered in a number of Maryland schools in June 1989. Later that month, a Town Meeting was also held to gain additional information from a broader segment of the population.

The final months were spent analyzing the data, formulating a specific set of recommendations and preparing the final report.

The Task Force realizes that many of its recommendations will have budgetary implications, necessitate extensive forward planning and will require some changes in current school and/or county and state policies. We fully support and expect such requirements in that we feel they are both necessary and educationally sound.

To reverse the disturbing trends in the decline in enrollment and graduation rates of the African-American male to which this Task Force has addressed itself, will require the active participation of the community-at-large, the public school systems, the systems of higher education, the various political bodies (local and state), the religious institutions;

community organizations and the family. Unless these trends are reversed, not only will the black family suffer, but so will every facet of American society including its economy, labor market, modern technology and the likes.

It is our hope that the greater community will come together and address these difficult challenges. It is our hope that the proposals and recommendations embodied in this report will promote a spirit of cooperation. It is our sincere hope that the respective individuals, groups, organizations and institutions, will reach early agreement on broad goals and objectives, outline specific steps and strategies and develop reasonable projections and timetables to implement those goals and concepts outlined. These goals must be pursued and achieved if we are to address the present and future educational needs of the black male in American society.

We wish to thank the many public school officials, noted experts, community leaders, parents and students who participated in these activities and for their valuable input. Their contributions enriched our deliberations immeasurably. We commend Mr. Roscoe Nix and the Montgomery County Maryland Branch of the NAACP for their vision and foresight in the appointment of this Task Force. It has been an exciting and rewarding experience.

The Task Force report represents the broad-based consensus of knowledgeable individuals on a critical problem facing American society. It would be extremely rewarding in the years to come to look back and find that this report has served as a focal point for productive coordination and cooperation among the various groups to which our recommendations are addressed. We believe that implementation of the Task Force's recommendations will result in a betterment of life everywhere.

Members of the Task Force

Foreword

The caste spirit is rampant in the land; it is laying hold of the public schools and it has the colored public schools by the throat, North, East, South, and West. Beware of it, my brothers and dark sisters; educate your children. Give them the broadest and highest education possible; train them to the limit of their ability, if you work your fingers to the bone doing it...Never forget that if we ever compel the world's respect, it will be by virtue of our heads, and not our heels.

W.E.B. Dubois, 1912

The body of this report represents the findings which resulted from research by the Task Force, a "Town Meeting" of students, parents, and other interested adults, consultation with persons who have expert knowledge of the subject, and a specially designed and administered survey. Following is a summarization of the most important findings which resulted from the Task Force's efforts.

A review of these important findings leads to a set of recommendations which the Task Force feels must be diligently pursued by individuals, organizations and institutions in Maryland if improvements are to be achieved. The failure to change existing customs and practices will levy a heavy penalty on the future growth and development of persons who are adversely affected, as well as society as a whole. No segment of our Nation or our State will be unaffected by the heavy burden of an undereducated and underutilized segment of our population represented by African-American men. There is good reason to expeditiously change the way higher education opportunities are provided and allocated in Maryland.

A STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

African-American males have historically been at risk since being brought as human chattel to what is now the United States. They were at risk from the time of their recorded presence in 1619, and unfortunately are still in a vulnerable state in 1990, three-hundred and seventy-one years later.

When viewed from any perspective one may choose, that of life expectancy, employment status, as a proportion of the prison population, incarceration in mental hospitals, homelessness, status of health, and other, black men in this society are at risk equal to or greater than any other subset of the nation's population.

During the latter half of the 1980's, attention has been focused on one additional area where African-American males are seriously at risk. That is in education generally, and higher education in particular. Much has been written recently in the professional education literature and to a lesser degree in the general press about the declining participation of African-American men in higher education. In some instances, attention has been called to the implications the drop has for the nation as well as the individuals so affected.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census and the U.S. Department of Education data shows that the problem is national, and not confined to any particular state or region of the country. Department of Education figures released in 1988, show an overall decline in the percentage of black men enrolled in institutions of higher education from 1976 to 1986[1]. The following table is derived from that survey.

Table 1
African-American Men Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education
Fall 1976 to Fall 1986[2]

	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986
Number of Enrollees in Thousands	470	453	464	458	437	436
As a Percentage of all Enrollees	4.3	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.5

Although the number reported for 1980 is larger than the number of enrollees in 1978, and the size of the decline reported for some of the other years is relatively small, the declining trend for the entire period is unmistakably clear. Nationwide, the enrollment of black men in institutions of higher education declined eight percent, while total enrollment for all students increased by 1.5 million between 1976 and 1986. The decline is all the more striking when it is considered that the drop is from an already unusually low participation rate for black men.

The unusually low base of participation in higher education can be seen in decennial census data reported by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for 1980, the most recent year for the collection of such data. African-Americans were reported to be 11.7 percent of the nation's population in 1980, and males were 47 percent of the total African-American population[3]. The 47 percent calculates to 5.5 percent of the nation's population, yet they were only 3.8 percent of all higher education enrollees during that year. The difference is significant.

On the other hand, white males were 39.5 percent of the nation's population, but were reported to be 40.5 percent of the higher education enrollment[4]. They were slightly overrepresented while black men were significantly underrepresented among higher education enrollees. The 1990 decennial census will undoubtedly show an even greater imbalance.

The same pattern of black male underenrollment in higher education for the country as a whole is also true for the State of Maryland. Numbers reported for two years during the 1980's, makes the point quite clear. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Maryland's higher education enrollment in 1984 was 239,249, and for 1986, the number was 239,880[5]. Total enrollment of African-Americans for the same years was 38,027 and 34,851 respectively, which calculated to 15.9 and 14.6 percent of the total enrollment in Maryland for the same years. The black higher education enrollment in each year was significantly less than the 23 percent of Maryland's total population which African-Americans were during those years.

Even more distressing is the rate of participation by African-American males. For 1984, and 1986, the male portion of the total black higher education enrollment in the state was 14,151 and 12,919 or 37 percent in each year of all African-American higher education enrollment. This means that black men were seriously underrepresented as a proportion of black enrollment as well as a proportion of total enrollment in Maryland's higher education institutions.

The implications of these numbers are important on several levels. For example, they convey the message unmistakably that an important element in Maryland's and for that matter, the nation's productive equation is not being fully developed and consequently is underutilized. That productivity factor is the human capital represented by African-American men.

Human capital may be defined as an individual's ability, talent, knowledge, training and education. Human capital can increase in value through training and education. The quality of human capital helps to determine the productivity of Maryland's economy, and to state the obvious, determines whether the state can be competitive in a rapidly changing, highly technological world. Ultimately it helps to determine whether the nation can maintain its competitive position in the evolving international economic order.

So the implications of our failure to develop all human capital to the optimum extent are well established. That alone should be sufficient to insure that the maximum opportunity for higher education is available to every one in this society, including the most underrepresented, African-American men.

On another level, the serious underrepresentation of black males in Maryland higher education institutions can be reflected in its impact on the income of the individual, and consequently his family and community. Income foregone or not earned furthermore, cannot trigger the beneficial multiplier effect which directly affects the standard of living and level of well being for many in the African-American community. Simply stated, there are significant costs, both on the macro or aggregate and the micro or individual levels, attached to the inadequate participation of black men as enrollees in higher education in the State of Maryland.

From any perspective, it is in the best interest of Maryland, the nation as a whole, as well as the individuals to expand the opportunities for African-American men to participate in, and it is hoped, complete higher education studies. Having established that fact beyond any question, the remainder of this report will address the issue of what needs to be done to correct the problem, by whom, and on what schedule. There is much to be done in order to bring about the needed changes by the state government including the Board of Education, the private sector, community organizations, families, and most of all the young men who are the focus of this effort.

It would be unwise to enter the decade of the 1990's, accepting such an enormous loss in human capital, as was the case for the 1980's and earlier. Productivity is the principal determinant of growth and future well being. It is not too daring to make the assertion that Maryland will not be successful as a competitive economic entity without the full and effective contribution of African-American men. That must translate into more higher education opportunities than have been available in the past.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The central theme emerging from this Task Force report is that African-American males, for a variety of reasons, are not enrolling in and graduating from four-year degree granting institutions in proportion to other ethnic or racial groups.

With original data collected by the Task Force and with a variety of existing local, state and national data sources, this report explores some of the factors that contribute to the low number of African-American males receiving baccalaureate degrees in Maryland. The report is divided into two separate parts.

Part One presents an overview of state data directly related to the issue of black male college enrollments. Our review of this data serves two purposes: (1) it sets the stage for later discussions; and (2) it offers answers to the Task Force's key question, "Why are fewer African-American males enrolling in and graduating from Maryland institutions of higher education?"

Part Two examines cross cutting issues and school related factors, both elementary and secondary, which have a direct impact on college attendance of African-American males. For example, do the current practices of academic tracking contribute to the low college enrollments? What happens to a child prior to his entry into the formal schooling process? Is kindergarten important? Also of importance, what happens to a child during the formal school years outside of school?

Children are not educated in a vacuum; the education process takes place within the larger context of society. Such current events as the high murder rate of African-American males, the crack cocaine war and the high incarceration rate of African-Americans cannot be overlooked. These events matter.

Findings

1. In Maryland 6 out of every 10 African-American male high school seniors have plans to continue their education after high school graduation. In contrast, nearly 8 out of every 10 white male seniors have plans to further their education. In addition, 2 out of every 10 African-American male high school seniors plan to join the military. In contrast, just 1 out of every 10 white male seniors plans to join the military.

2. Overall, full-time college enrollments for African-Americans declined 12 percent for the eight year period between 1981 and 1988. Modest increases of two percent are reported for non-African-American students.

3. In Maryland African-American males enroll in college at much lower rates than do their non-African-American counterparts. In 1988, African-American males represented 35 percent of the African-Americans enrolled full-time in Maryland undergraduate colleges. In contrast, non-African-American males represented nearly half of the non-African-Americans enrolled full-time.

4. Roughly 44 percent of the African-American students who attend college in Maryland do so at a community college. The remaining 56 percent attend a four-year college. Currently the transfer rate for African-American students attending community colleges in Maryland is about half that of white students, 10 percent and 24 percent respectively.

5. Data show that 53 to 60 percent of white undergraduates make it to their fourth year of college, while 39 to 43 percent of the African-Americans do the same. The retention of African-American students in Maryland colleges did improve during the 1980's; however, in spite of the improvements, 50 percent of the African-American undergraduates still leave college by the end of their sophomore year.

6. In 1988, African-American students got relatively small scholarships compared with whites, although their families had significantly lower incomes. African-American students received an average grant of $779, compared to $983 for whites. Yet, the average family income of African-American scholarship winners was $18,239, compared to $28,733 for whites.

7. For African-American students, over a recent five year period (1981-1985), the percentage receiving grants declined, and the percentage receiving loans increased. For non-African-American students--more of them received scholarships and there was no decline or increase in the number receiving loans. In fact, the overall percentage of African-American students receiving aid declined, from 76 percent to 68 percent, while in contrast, the percentage of non-African-American students receiving aid increased, from 30 percent to 34 percent.

8. Among recent African-American college graduates, nearly two-thirds felt they would not have been able to earn their degree without financial aid. In comparison, a little more than one third of the non-African-American students feel the same way.

9. Research in pre-school and early childhood education shows that success of these program areas results in less cost to society and produces for the students involved: higher school achievement; higher test scores; less involvement with the legal/justice system; more long-term employability; greater high school/college attendance/completion and productive taxpayers.

10. A Montgomery County Public School/National Science Foundation Study attests to the importance of teacher expectations, student attitude toward math, parental/home support and consistent student passing of math tests, as key to successful school achievement.

Contributing factors appear to be:

- o family income and lack of exposure to collegiate experiences;
- o unfamiliarity with the early "process" of college/academic preparation
  - options available,
  - financial aid and scholarship sources,
  - true cost of tuition at college;
- o indicators related to early childhood education;
- o alternative plans to enter the military;
- o lack of a supportive peer group with similar goals and ambitions,; and
- o enrollment in community college vocational/technical as opposed to academic programs.

Discussion

Why are we so surprised by the condition of African-American men in Maryland? Why is it so difficult for us to understand why African-American men or for that matter, African-American women, receive so few college degrees compared to non-African-Americans? Anyone who spends some time analyzing the numbers cannot possibly come away uncertain. The evidence is too clear to be confusing.

We cannot expect the number of African-American men receiving college degrees to increase until we understand the following:

1. In high school, fewer African-American men make plans to further their education.

2. It is obvious that not enough is being done to educate African-American men about the advantages of a college education. "A college educated African-American is likely to have $15,562 more in net worth than one with only a high school education. Similarly, an African-American man who receives a college degree earns, on an average, $7,630 more a year than an African-American high school graduate. African-American men who attend graduate school earn $9,265 more than college graduates." (Money, December 1989.)

3. In high school, proportionally more African-American men plan to enter the military. A 1988 survey of Baltimore City high school graduates reveals that 69 percent of those planning to enter the military do so because it ensures long-term security and more opportunities for promotion.

4. During the 1980's, the number of African-American men attending college full-time declined significantly. Study after study demonstrates that part-time college enrollment does not lead to college completion. If we are going to increase the number of African-American men enrolling in and graduating from college, then we have to reverse this trend.

5. The number of African-American men receiving college degrees in Maryland is linked to improving the transfer rate of African-American students from two-year colleges to four-year colleges. Too many African-Americans end their education at two-year colleges.

6. The number of African-American men receiving college degrees in Maryland is linked to improving the graduation rates of African-American students. Too many African-Americans drop out of college before reaching their senior year. It will do little good to increase the number of college enrollees only to lose them two years later.

7. In Maryland, African-American college students receive less financial aid than whites. Those African-American students who do receive aid receive most of it in the form of loans. Students who depend on loans to finance their college education are more likely to drop out of college than those students who finance their education through scholarships and grants.

Recommendations

In order to recapture the underutilized population of African-American males and to promote their completion of four-year degree programs, the following recommendations should be reviewed and an action plan developed. The state and local governments, as well as the general community, have an increasingly critical role to play in achieving the goal of increasing college enrollment and graduation of African-American males.

Recommendation to the Governor and State and County Legislators

1. Increase financial aid in the form of grants and scholarships.

   - o Establish an independent state-wide scholarship program similar to the Cleveland Scholarship Program. This program should offer individual college and career counseling and guidance for nontraditional students who wish to attend college.

   - o Establish a public, state-wide scholarship program similar to the Liberty Scholarship Program in New York. This program entitles every high school graduate a tuition-free education at a state run institution.

2. An audit should be made of the state scholarships awarded for the past three years.

   - o An examination of these awards should include gender, ethnic groups and race of recipients.

   - o The criteria for awards should be made known by the officials and the State Scholarship Board and widely disseminated.

   - o An accounting of minorities receiving these scholarships would help establish or eliminate concerns of equity and fairness.

Recommendations to University and College Boards of Trustees, Presidents, and Faculty

1. Each university or college governing board should review its institution's mission to determine if there are impediments which prevent the institution(s) for which it has oversight from serving the educational needs of the African-American male. If such impediments do exist, they should be removed by whatever means are necessary.

2. Trustees and Presidents should make a commitment to expanding the enrollment and retention of African-American male students. Individual campus plans for expanding the capacity to serve this population must be developed. Accountability provisions should be incorporated in each higher education institution's plans. Annual performance reviews should be included in an annual report.

3. Cognizant officials should identify innovative and successful programs which attract, retain, and graduate African-American male students. Comprehensive information on such program practices should be disseminated to all campuses.

4. State supported bridge programs should be established in all tax supported two-year and four-year post secondary institutions. Increase African-American male enrollment in bridge programs by 15 percent each school year until the increase in full-time African-American male college undergraduate enrollment is double the 1988 figure of 6,415. Evaluate for continuation at the end of the 1993 school year.

5. A minority set aside should be established in all state tax supported scholarship programs and using 1989 as the base year, increase total awards to minority students by 50 percent each year until total minority awards proportionately are equal to non-minority student awards. Of the minority set aside, allocate a specific annual allocation to African-American males, until African-American male full-time college undergraduate enrollment is double the 1988 figure (6,415). The state should evaluate for program continuation at the end of the 1993 school year.

6. A competitive grants program in the 17 public two-year colleges should be established with an annual state appropriation of $900,000 for a three-year period to demonstrate various approaches in developing transfer programs.

    o. Dual admissions programs should be established so that any student who successfully completes an approved associate degree program: (1) will be guaranteed admission with junior status to any public four-year institution in the state, and (2) will not be required to repeat any course taken in the community college if the grade earned is a C or better.

    o. African-American male transfer rate should be equal that of white students transferring to four-year colleges. The African-American transfer rate is currently about 10 percent and the white rate is 25 percent. Significant improvements in transfer rate should occur by 1993.

Recommendations to the Maryland State Department of Education and Maryland Board for Higher Education

1. The Maryland State Department of Education should provide information to all school systems on financial assistance available for postsecondary education in all forms and provide information on Federal scholarship and grant programs.

2. The Maryland State Department of Education should recommend to the state legislature criteria for selection of candidates for state scholarships.

3. The Maryland State Department of Education should develop and/or improve accountability and tracking mechanisms.

- o There should be a state wide system monitoring the progress of minority students from institution to institution.

4. The Maryland State Department of Education should monitor minority representation in all its divisions, and publish its data annually.

5. The Maryland State Department of Education should monitor minority representation in the state public colleges and universities in order to ensure representative make up in colleges and universities.

6. Efforts should be made to publicize and disseminate information about successful programs and practices to all jurisdictions.

7. Identify and visit school districts with validated, successful African-American male student programs which focus on academics, retention and graduation. The goal is to study the successful programs for replication purposes. Local school districts would provide funds for this goal. Local school districts could receive assistance from the Federally funded National Diffusion Network (US Department of Education) which finds successful education programs and assists school districts in connecting with successful school personnel.

8. State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Local Educations Agencies (LEAs) should explore how Federal funds allocated to them for school improvement purposes could be utilized to assist recommended program implementation.

9. Recommend that Maryland SEA work conjointly with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and all other Maryland agencies and associations concerned with postsecondary education on the items presented as recommendations for improving the education of the Maryland African-American male. (Resource for names of such agencies: Directory of Maryland Public and Private Postsecondary Education Institutions, Agencies and Boards - 1989).

Recommendations to Public School Systems

1. Outreach groups for young African-American parents should be established in conjunction with the African-American fraternal, collegiate, religious, and social groups to develop a peer support system to assist in planning the child's educational future at an early age. These groups could also serve as an advocacy group for parents, when needed, as they enter and interact with local, state, and larger social and political institutions.

   - o These groups should help mentor the students during the formative elementary and secondary years of schooling and should provide both resource knowledge and experience as well as personal support as needed.

- o Parenting skills, economic options and opportunities should be the focus of regular small group meetings.

2. Since Montgomery County has the highest increase in African-American college enrollments, a study should be conducted to determine why that county's trend is positive.

   - o To what can one attribute the increasing enrollment of African-American students in college?

   - o Can those factors be replicated in other jurisdictions?

3. Increase the use of high school summer "bridge" programs for African-Americans. These talent search programs should begin as early as the seventh grade to encourage familiarity and knowledge of educational options (i.e., Summer Search in Montgomery County).

4. All local school systems should have, or put in place, a monitoring system reporting the number of African-Americans in college preparatory programs and target realistic increases over time.

5. All local school systems should have, or put in place, a communications effort to make the community in general, and African-Americans in particular, more aware of the benefits of college. This campaign should target parents, students and educators.

6. Increase appointment of African-American male teachers, especially for grades Kindergarten-12. Improve salary and other benefits to attract more qualified teachers.

Recommendations to the African-American Community

1. In order to change the unacceptably low level of African-American male student enrollment in and completion of college, there is a unique role which parents must play. They must accept and fulfill their responsibility as participants in all aspects of their child's education, from the time of entry into pre-school until they finish college. The extent of their involvement is an important determinant of the student's choices for success. Families have the responsibility for providing the appropriate environment, encouragement, nurturing and oversight as the basis for academic achievement and personal development.

   Regardless of their economic circumstances, parents are obligated to help their student understand higher education as an achievable option. They must prepare themselves to understand the issues which must be addressed in arriving at sound decisions on the matter of pursuing higher education. By doing so, the student and the family will have a significant advantage.

2. Outreach groups for young parents should be established by the African-American fraternal, collegiate, religious and social groups to assist in planning their children's future. These groups should support young parents and act as an advocacy group for those parents, when needed, as the children enter and interact with the local state and larger social and political institutions.

3. Active recruitment of potentially successful political candidates for county, state, and national office must be consciously planned and continuously addressed through both independent and party affiliation.

4. Establishment of a formal networking system for information and referral should be immediately pursued.

   - o African-American parents with children successful in college, or recently graduated, should conduct question and answer sessions for other interested African-American parents.

   - o Patenting skills, economic options and opportunities through education should be a focus of small group meetings or functions as a regular social or church program.

5. Increased use of African-American professionals to act as role models should be pursued.

6. Continue fund raising efforts to make financial aid in the form of grants and scholarships available to young African-Americans.

Recommendations to the Business Community

1. Provide scholarships as well as workplace internships to minority students at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

   - o Merrill Lynch and the Urban League provided a long-term program beginning in 1988.

2. Increase the involvement of private businesses in support of special programs for African-American men. Programs such as the Meyerhoff Scholars Program at the University of Maryland at Baltimore County need to be increased.

3. Support should be provided for a public relations campaign to make African-Americans, in general, more aware of the benefits of college. This campaign should be targeted to parents, students, and the rest of the business community.

4. Leadership including trade associations as well as individual businesses should focus attention on the fact that the nation's economic strength and productivity depend on our ability to maintain a quality work force. College educated African-American males are becoming an ever increasing proportion of the work force, but are not making the contribution they have the potential to make. Therefore, it is in the interest of the business community to promote the full development and education of African-American male to ensure the quality and quantity work force which will be needed in the 1990's and beyond.

5. Business and industry can maintain direct links to the underrepresented populations of African-American males by providing scholarships and grants to students, especially from low income circumstances. They can also send an important message of encouragement to this population by hiring persons who prepare themselves for position of responsibility and once and for all, eliminating the remaining vestiges of discrimination in assignment and promotions based on color or ethnic origin.

Recommendations to African-American Male Students

Just as political, civic and religious leaders, organizations and institutions in Maryland have important roles to play in correcting the serious underenrollment and graduation of African-American males in higher education, so do the young men themselves. Each has to understand as much as anyone, they are born with the potential to grow, succeed, and make a contribution to society. Actual or perceived disadvantage should be viewed as a challenge to be surmounted, not as a permanent barrier.

On the matter of higher education African-American male students should:

- o make a commitment to excel and refuse to accept failure as an alternative;
- o set meaningful goals;
- o set high levels, but appropriate standards for achieving goals;
- o not exclude the possibility of enrolling in college without fully considering all pros and cons;
- o understand the empowerment which higher education provides;
- o seek answers for questions which make for sound decisions;
- o and identify all sources of support.

PART ONE

BLACK COLLEGE ENROLLMENTS IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Enrollment Trends: An Overview

Summary: Overall, full-time college enrollments for blacks declined 12 percent for the eight year period between 1981 and 1988. Modest increases are reported for non-black students. College enrollments by blacks in Baltimore City declined significantly, more than 4,000 fewer students attended college from 1982 to 1987. Throughout the 1980's, college enrollments increased slightly for black residents for Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, and Howard County.

Predictions of low college enrollments for the 1980's were very commonplace during the latter half of the 1970's. These predictions were fueled by the steady decline of 15 to 24-year-olds. "Our youth population began shrinking in 1980, as the late Baby Boomers reached age 25 and were replaced by much smaller cohorts of the Baby Bust era. The number of 15 to 24 year old Americans fell from a peak of almost 43 million to about 37 million early in 1989, plummeting 13 percent in less than a decade[6]. Maryland's youth population also declined during the 1980's; however, the decline in Maryland was much more severe than it was throughout the rest of the nation. At the secondary school level, Maryland lost 28 percent of its secondary school age population from 1978 to 1988. This was an absolute loss of 112,474 students. For those jurisdictions with large African-American populations the decline was greater. The decline in Baltimore City was nearly 32,000 students (45 percent) and the decline in Prince George's County was slightly more than 20,000 students (29 percent). Overall from 1978 to 1988, black public school enrollments in Maryland dropped 18,696 students. Public school enrollments for other minority groups, Hispanic and Asians, nearly doubled during this same time period[7,8].

Regardless of the negative predictions and in spite of the obvious - fewer teenagers - college enrollments increased during the 1980's. In 1986, enrollment in higher education reached an all time high of 12.5 million students. Between 1976 and 1986, the latest year for which enrollment figures are available through the National Center of Education Statistics, the total enrollment in higher education increased 13.8 percent, from just under 11 million students[9]. In Maryland, total college undergraduate enrollments also increased a modest 6percent. The increases reported in Table 2, were not drastic but in light of the declining secondary school age population the increases point out that if it had not been for substantial increases in part-time enrollments, Maryland would have suffered a decline in undergraduate enrollments. In fact, between 1981 and 1988, full-time undergraduate enrollments did decline.

Table 2
Undergraduate Enrollment Trends (All Public Institutions)

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	%Change
ALL BLACKS									
Full-time	17,879	17,517	17,966	16,605	15,280	14,574	15,306	15,701	-12%
Part-time	15,698	16,298	17,421	16,816	15,661	15,647	16,936	18,350	+17%
Total	33,577	33,815	33,421	30,941	30,221	32,221	32,242	34,051	+ 1%
ALL NON-BLACKS									
Full-time	68,140	68,846	68,920	67,408	66,854	67,093	67,961	69,629	+ 2%
Part-time	77,088	81,451	83,411	82,211	82,112	82,074	82,486	85,459	+11%
Total	145,228	150,297	152,231	149,619	148,966	149,167	150,447	155,079	+ 7%
ALL STUDENTS									
Full-time	86,019	86,363	86,886	84,013	82,134	81,667	83,267	85,321	- 1%
Part-time	92,786	97,748	100,832	99,027	97,773	97,721	99,422	103,809	+12%
Total	178,805	184,112	187,718	183,040	179,907	179,388	182,689	189,130	+ 6%

Source: Maryland State Board for Higher Education, MHEC Enrollment Information System (June 1989).

It might be fair to describe the data for black college enrollments throughout the 1980's as "erratic." When compared to non-black students in Maryland, black student college enrollments were not as predictable. For example, data reported in Table 2 show that in 1981, 53 percent of the blacks enrolled in college did so on a full-time basis. The balance 47 percent were enrolled on a part-time basis. However, by 1988, the majority of black undergraduate enrollees had become part-time students -- 54 percent versus 46 percent. Non-blacks ratio for full- to part-time students remained stable from 1981 to 1988. From 1981 to 1988, full-time enrollments for blacks declined 12 percent. During this same period, full-time enrollments for non-blacks increased 2 percent.

Data reported in Table 3 shows between 1984 and 1986, black enrollments both male and female, declined in Maryland, but between 1986 and 1988, enrollments increased. These increases were not as drastic for both males and females. Black female enrollment between 1986 and 1988, increased by 2,535 students in comparison to black male whose enrollment increase was 927 students. In other words, black males accounted for 27 percent of the total black enrollment increase of 3,462 students. A similar pattern exist for non-blacks who had an enrollment increase of 5,912 students. So, when things were improving for black undergraduates, the improvements were mainly assisting black females.

It is very important to note that the data in Table 3 makes it clear that the five years between 1984 and 1988, did not end well for black males. Full-time enrollments for black males declined two percent over the five year period and full-time enrollments for black females declined eight percent. Modest increases are reported for non-black students.

In addition, it is wise to note that neighboring states such as Virginia and Pennsylvania, with similar black college enrollments, did not fare nearly as bad as Maryland did between 1984 and 1986. In other words, some neighbors actually increased their black enrollments while Maryland's was declining. For example, Virginia managed to increase its black college enrollment by seven percent between 1984 and 1986[10].

With very few exceptions, and these exceptions occur in the state's smaller counties, the secondary school age population declined during the 1980's. This decline, however, did not impact college enrollments the same throughout the state. In most jurisdictions throughout the state the decline made little or no difference in black college enrollments. Data presented in Table 4 clearly shows that throughout the 1980's, college enrollments increased for black residents in Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Anne Arundel, Baltimore County, and Howard County. The increases are small, but nonetheless, real. Perhaps the most important thing to note from data presented in Table 3 is what happened in Baltimore City. College enrollments by blacks in Baltimore City declined significantly, 4,554 fewer students attended college from 1982 to 1987.

TABLE 3
Undergraduate Enrollment Trends (all Public Institutions)
by Race and Gender

	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	%Change
Black Men						
Full-time	6,526	6,197	5,937	6,227	6,415	- 2%
Part-time	5,956	5,344	5,495	5,781	6,180	4%
Total	12,482	11,541	11,668	12,008	12,595	1%
Black Women						
Full-time	10,079	9,083	8,637	9,079	9,286	- 8%
Part-time	10,860	10,317	10,284	11,155	12,170	12%
Total	20,939	19,400	18,921	20,234	21,456	3%
All Blacks						
Full-time	16,605	15,280	14,574	15,306	15,701	- 5%
Part-time	16,816	15,661	15,647	16,939	18,350	9%
Total	30,941	30,221	32,221	32,242	34,051	2%
Non-Black Men						
Full-time	33,835	33,522	33,432	33,691	34,288	1%
Part-time	33,960	33,549	33,296	22,268	34,523	2%
Total	67,795	67,071	66,728	66,959	68,812	2%
Non-Black Women						
Full-time	33,573	33,332	33,661	34,270	35,332	5%
Part-time	48,251	48,563	48,778	49,218	50,935	6%
Total	81,824	81,895	82,439	83,488	86,267	5%
All-Non Blacks						
Full-time	67,408	66,854	67,093	67,961	69,629	3%
Part-time	82,211	82,112	82,074	82,486	85,459	4%
Total	149,619	148,966	149,167	150,447	155,079	4%

Source: Maryland State Board for Higher Education, MHEC Enrollment Information System (June 1, 1989).

During the same period that Baltimore City's college enrollments were declining the city was also becoming noted for a few other "head turning statistics[11]". Of America's 170 largest cities Baltimore was ranked:

- first for births to teens that were out of wedlock;
- fifth for children not living in two-parent families;
- eleventh for children living in poverty; and
- twenty-fourth for teens not enrolled in school.

Once again, the Task Force takes the position that these issues matter.

TABLE 4
Black College Enrollments by County of Residence
Selected Counties

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	5-Year Change
Baltimore City	14,642	15,205	13,407	11,320	9,981	10,088	-4,554
Prince George's	8,848	9,244	9,109	8,966	9,087	9,817	+ 969
Baltimore County	3,326	3,431	3,393	3,306	3,344	3,557	+ 231
Montgomery	2,052	2,320	2,563	2,745	3,120	3,279	+1,229
Anne Arundel	1,129	1,250	1,282	1,261	1,304	1,353	+ 224
Howard	909	903	952	906	956	1,093	+ 184

Source: State Board for Higher Education, The Enrollment of Black Students in Maryland Institutions of Higher Education: Fall 1987. Annapolis, State Board for Higher Education, April 1988.

FEWER BLACK MALE FRESHMEN MEANS FEWER BLACK MALE GRADUATES

Summary: Understanding why black males in Maryland receive fewer baccalaureate degrees is partly explained by the fact that black males enroll in college at much lower rates than do their non-black counterparts. In 1988, black males represented just 35 percent of the blacks enrolled full-time in Maryland undergraduate colleges.

Understanding why black males in Maryland receive fewer baccalaureate degrees is partly explained by data presented in Table 3. When compared to non-black males, it is more than obvious that black males enroll in college at much lower rates. The arithmetic and logic are simple, fewer black male freshmen means fewer black college graduates. The imbalance between black males and black females full-time college enrollment has not improved over the past five years. In fact, the imbalance has gotten worse. In 1984, black males made up 39 percent of Maryland's full-time black undergraduate college enrollments. By 1988, black males made up 35 percent of Maryland's full-time black undergraduate college enrollments. This imbalance by sex does not occur for non-black students. In fact, the sex split for non-blacks has been an even 50 - 50 split for the last five years.

The unevenness of the black male/female college enrollments cannot be explained totally by the fact that there are more black females than black males. In the U.S. "for every 100 black females, there are 90.6 males, compared with 95.2 white males for every 100 white females[12]." In Maryland, for every 100 black females there are 89 males, compared with 94.9 white males for every 100 white females[13]. However, experts note that some of the disparity is reduced when the black males census undercounts are factored in.[14] In short, the fact that fewer black males are enrolled full-time in college cannot be simply explained away by the fact that there are fewer black men. Other factors have to be responsible for the black male-to-female disparity.

THE FUTURE EDUCATION PLANS OF MARYLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Summary: Prior to high school graduation, about 58 percent of black males say they will attend college, and about 76 percent of the white males say they plan to do the same.

During the 1980's as the secondary school age population in Maryland was declining, the percentage of graduating seniors planning to attend college was steadily increasing. Regardless of sex, the increases were recorded for all race and ethnic groups. It is fair to speculate that if these increases had not occurred when they did, college enrollments throughout the state would have declined noticeably. In the case of black college enrollments, the declines that did occur would have been much more severe.

Table 5 reports the percentage of black and white males in Maryland who said they planned to attend college either part-time or full-time after graduating from high school. As noted above, the increases for black males are steady. However in spite of the increases, it is important to note the contrast between the total percentage of white males who plan to attend college with that of black males. Prior to high school graduation, about 58 percent of the black males say they will attend college, and about 76 percent of the white males say they plan to do the same. The Maryland State Department of Education has been gathering postgraduation plans from graduating seniors for nearly a decade now and according to their follow-up studies, about 85 percent of the students who say they plan to attend college actually end up in college. In light of this, the real percentage of black male high school graduates who actually end up enrolling in college is probably a lot closer to 50 percent.

TABLE 5
Planning to go to College: Plans of Graduating Seniors
Black Males Versus White Males

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Full Time Percentage						
Blacks	37.2	36.7	39.4	38.9	41.3	47.4
Whites	54.9	58.1	59.0	59.8	64.7	65.2
Part Time Percentage						
Blacks	9.8	11.2	10.1	11.5	10.2	10.5
Whites	10.1	10.4	10.9	10.1	9.0	10.6
Total Percentage						
Blacks	47.0	47.9	49.5	50.4	51.5	57.9
Whites	65.0	68.5	69.9	69.9	73.7	75.8

Source: Data are taken from the annual survey of graduating seniors. Data represent all local education agencies (LEA's) in Maryland. Vocational education students are not excluded from the data.

THE MILITARY PLANS OF MARYLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Summary: The troubling thing about Maryland's military data is the consistently high percentage of black males who say they plan to join the military. The data for black males in Maryland are higher than the national figures, 23.3 percent (Maryland) versus 13.9 percent (U.S.), and it is also higher than the figure reported for white males in Maryland, 21.5 percent versus 9.2 percent.

In 1988, the American Council on Education issued a report rebutting the notion that military recruitment efforts have caused the college enrollment rates of blacks to suffer. In short, the study found that there was no competition for high school graduates between the military and higher education. In fact, the study found that between October 1979 and October 1986, the percentage of black high school graduates joining the military declined, dropping from 21 percent in 1979 to 13.9 percent in 1986[15].

The Task Force thinks it is important to note here that percentages do not always tell the whole story. According to the Department of Defense, the number of black men serving in the armed forces increased during this same time period. In 1976 there were 288,623 black men in the armed forces. In 1987, the number of black men in the armed forces had climbed to 356,583[16].

In Maryland the percentage of black graduates planning to go into the military also declined, but the decline was roughly 5 percent. The troubling thing about Maryland's data is the consistently high percentage of black males who say they plan to join the military. The data for black males in Maryland are higher than the national figure reported by ACE, 23.3 percent versus 13.9 percent (1986), and it is also higher than the figure reported for white males in Maryland, 21.5 percent versus 9.2 percent (1988). The way things stand now, more than one-fifth of the black male high school graduates plan to enter the military. Patriotism and opportunities aside, the responsibility of defending this nation should not fall disproportionately on African-American males.

TABLE 6
Planning to go into Military Service: Plans of Graduating Seniors
Black Males versus White Males

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Blacks	26.9%	26.1%	25.1%	23.3%	23.9%	21.5%
Whites	11.1%	8.9%	11.0%	9.9%	8.0%	9.2%

Source: Data are taken from the annual survey of graduating seniors. Data represent all LEA's in Maryland. Vocational education students are not excluded from the data.

THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ROUTE

Summary: Roughly 44 percent of the black students who attend college in the state do so at a community college. The remaining balance, 56 percent, attend a four-year college. Currently, the transfer rate for black students attending community college in Maryland is about half of what it is for white students, 10 percent versus 24 percent.

Recent data from Maryland's State Board for Higher Education reveal that roughly 44 percent of the black students who attend college in the state do so at a community college[16]. The remaining balance, 56 percent attend a four year college[17]. Maryland's 44 percent is nearly identical to the national figure of 43 percent[18].

One contributing factor to the high percentages of high school graduates, black or otherwise, who choose the community college route is the relatively low cost of the community college program. Currently, 25 percent of the seniors in Montgomery County public schools indicate plans to attend one of the three Montgomery College campuses. The cost per student for one full-time semester at Montgomery College is approximately $600.

In the past, community or two-year colleges have been criticized and questioned about their ability to further the education of black college students. A recently completed congressionally-mandated report examining vocational-ed programs at two-year colleges concluded that about 51 percent of blacks enrolled in two-year colleges do not complete their intended field of study[19]. The study also noted that among the high school class of 1980, only 19 percent of those who entered community colleges earned a degree or certificate. As of the Fall of 1987, 4 percent of blacks who entered a Maryland community college in 1984 earned a degree or certificate[20]. More than 70 percent of these black students dropped out[21].

One very well known study of community colleges and minority students observed that minority students enrolling in community colleges are pursuing large numbers of vocational, rather than liberal arts curricular, and this diminishes their chances for transfer to a four-year college[22]. This study reported that two year colleges are frequently regarded as dead-end institutions, subjecting the student to a process of "cooling out."

In Maryland, one might want to argue about that "cooling out" process, but one thing is clear--not many black community college students transfer to four-year colleges. In 1984, the year in which the most recent transfer statistics are available, the transfer rate for black students attending community colleges was about half of what it is for white students, 10 percent versus 24 percent (Table 7). The percentages are somewhat better at Montgomery College, where the transfer rates for black students is approximately 17 percent.

We should view matriculation at community colleges in a positive light. The students who matriculate are continuing to develop critical skills and are pursuing a higher education. Indeed, if the state transfer rates for African-American and whites were equal, Maryland would double the number of blacks transferring to a four-year college.

TABLE 7

Black and White Transfer Rates: From a Two-year to a Four-year College

Class	Black Students	White Students	Difference
1984	10.0% (2135)*	23.8% (6088)	13.8%
1983	8.5 (2313)	22.3 (6351)	13.8
1982	8.7 (2298)	22.1 (6995)	13.4
1981	8.5 (2384)	20.9 (6768)	12.4
1980	9.5 (2259)	21.0 (6701)	11.5

Source: Maryland State Board of Higher Education, status of community college first-time, full-time freshmen three years after first enrollment. Annapolis, State Board for Higher Education, May 1988. Dropping Out of College: A Serious Problem for Blacks

TRENDS IN RETENTION WITHIN AND GRADUATION FROM CAMPUS FIRST ATTENDED

Summary: The data shows that 53 percent to 60 percent of the white undergraduates make it to their fourth year of college, and 39 percent to 43 percent of the black coeds do the same. The retention of black students in Maryland colleges did improve between the years 1979 to 1986; however, in spite of the improvements, nearly 50 percent of the black coeds still leave college by the end of their sophomore year.

Regardless of the group, be it black males or white females, dropping out of college is a serious problem for all undergraduates. Overall, about half the students who enter U.S. colleges as freshmen fail to make it to graduation.[23] Yet, when race of the student is considered, college dropout rates do not vary greatly.

When it comes to persistence, the ability to matriculate successfully through college, black undergraduates in Maryland do not fare as well as white undergraduates. It is important to note, however, the retention rates for white undergraduates in Maryland do exceed national standards. Data in Table 8 shows that about 53 percent to 60 percent of the white undergraduates make it to their fourth year of college. The range for black undergraduates is 39 percent to 43 percent. The retention of blacks in Maryland colleges did improve between the years 1977 to 1986; however, in spite of the improvements, and regardless of the year, nearly 50 percent of the black coeds leave college by the end of their sophomore year.

In short, dropping out of college is a serious problem for all students throughout the United States, but is an even greater problem for black males and females in both the State of Maryland and the nation.

TABLE 8
TRENDS IN RETENTION WITHIN AND GRADUATION
FROM CAMPUS FIRST ATTENDED

COHORT	percent ENROLLED OR GRADUATED BY FALL OF 2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	7th Year	8th Year*
			- ALL STUDENTS -				
1977	70.8	55.0	49.1	43.4	43.4	43.7	42.1
1978	73.0	56.8	50.7	45.2	44.0	44.4	42.6
1979	72.7	56.9	50.5	44.6	43.3	43.7	41.7
1980	72.1	56.4	50.5	43.9	42.8	43.4	41.3
1981	72.5	57.8	51.3	45.4	44.0	44.6	
1982	74.2	57.5	52.4	46.2	44.8		
1983	73.1	58.1	52.8	47.6			
1984	75.1	61.8	55.9				
1985	76.1	63.0					
1986	77.7						
			- BLACK STUDENTS -				
1977	61.0	46.0	38.5	31.3	28.6	29.1	26.6
1978	65.6	46.9	38.3	32.9	29.7	29.6	26.8
1979	64.2	47.0	39.2	33.2	29.0	28.3	26.1
1980	61.4	43.8	37.4	30.3	27.4	26.7	24.7
1981	63.5	47.4	38.5	32.1	27.9	27.3	
1982	65.1	46.8	39.0	31.6	27.8		
1983	61.7	45.6	38.6	33.0			
1984	65.9	50.0	42.5				
1985	67.1	52.1					
1986	72.0						
			- WHITE STUDENTS -				
1977	74.1	57.8	52.7	47.6	48.6	49.0	47.7
1978	75.1	59.7	54.4	49.1	48.4	48.8	47.3
1979	75.5	60.0	54.1	48.0	47.9	48.6	46.7
1980	75.5	60.2	54.7	48.0	47.7	48.7	46.8
1981	75.5	61.2	55.7	50.1	49.7	50.5	
1982	76.9	60.9	56.8	50.9	50.5		
1983	76.6	61.5	57.1	52.0			
1984	77.7	65.3	60.0				
1985	78.6	65.7					
1986	79.0						

* Percent Graduated only

Source: State Board for Higher Education, Trends in the Retention of full-time Freshmen at Maryland Senior Public Institutions. Annapolis, State Board for Higher Education, April 1988.

FINANCIAL AID

Summary: Many students are confused about how much college costs (the general over pricing of college). In addition, many students are confused about where to go to seek aid, and those who know where to go find the process highly confusing and complex.

Among recent black college graduates, nearly two-thirds feel they would not have been able to earn their degrees without financial aid. In comparison, a little more than a third of the non-black students feel the same way.

For black students, over a recent five year period, the percentage receiving grants declined, and the percentage receiving loans increased. For non-black students--more of them ended up receiving scholarships and there was no decline or increase in the number receiving grants or loans.

Black students got relatively small scholarships compared with whites, even though their families had significantly lower incomes. Black students received an average grant of $779, compared with $993 for whites. Yet, the average family income of black scholarship winners was $18,239, compared with $28,733 for whites.

Successfully being able to obtain a baccalaureate degree depends on a lot of things. High school preparation, the amount and the type of college preparation course work, matters. Self-confidence, and believing in yourself, also counts. College and student match, feeling "comfortable" or "at home," is important. And, it goes that without adequate financial support, most students would find the successful pursuit of the baccalaureate degree an impossible dream.

If financial aid is so important, then why is it that most of us, and nearly every potential college student, is so confused about it? Take for example, the recent findings from a Gallup poll. The poll found that most young Americans think a college education costs three times as much as it actually does. Respondents overestimated the average cost of one year tuition, fees and books, at a state four-year college or university by nearly $5,000. Respondents estimated the cost to be $6,841 but the real average cost is $1,977. In addition to being confused about the cost of college, many respondents were also confused about how to obtain aid or who was eligible to receive aid. For example, nearly a quarter of the respondents thought the Federal Government was the only source of aid. Among those with no plans to attend college, 28 percent cited "not enough money" as the most common reason for not going to college[24]. Being confused about how much college costs is just a small fraction of the financial aid issue. There is also the issue of students who end up not going to college simply because they fill out the aid forms improperly. In July of 1988 The Chronicle of Higher Education did a feature story on this issue, highlighting

the problems Maryland low income black students face when attempting to apply for aid. Hard statistics are not presented in the story but comments from several professionals are worth repeating here:

> "...There are only about 170 Talent Search programs in the country. That means that relatively few high school seniors have someone ... to help them weave their way through the maze of questions, boxes, and narrows that approaches the complexity of the 1040 income tax form."
>
> "...As a result, say financial-aid administrators and Congressional aides, low income students - the very people for whom the assistance programs were created - are being left alone to face a form they may not know how to complete."
>
> "...We tell these kids to stay in school, get straight A's, and stay away from drugs, but that won't mean anything if we can't give them a simple enough form to fill out so they can get the money they need to go to school...I just can't imagine how many students don't go to school because they can't fill out the forms."
>
> "...The current application is a barrier for first generation college students... It's gotten as complicated as a tax form. You practically have to be an accountant to fill it out[25]."
>
> So when it comes to the financial aid issue several things are clear:
>
> - many students are confused about how much college costs;
> - many students are confused about where to go to seek aid; and
> - many students who seek aid find the process confusing.

But all is not lost. There is some good news out of a recent study performed by the American College Testing Program. That study found that: "Americans have a generally positive attitude toward borrowing to finance educational expenses. Four out of five Americans indicate that they have a favorable attitude toward borrowing for this purpose. Moreover, borrowing to finance educational expenses has remained a top priority for Americans for over two decades[26].

In addition, the ACT study reports that by 1983 blacks and whites had the most favorable attitudes toward educational loans; about 81 percent of blacks and whites have favorable attitudes. These findings are encouraging because they tell us that blacks are willing to invest in education. It is important to note, however, that favorable attitudes for blacks decline when income is factored in. In other words, poor blacks are less likely to invest in education when compared to the investment behaviors of middle class blacks.
Two recent studies provide us with an ideal look at how financial aid works or does not work in Maryland. In addition, these studies shed light on how much aid goes to black and white students, and to a certain extent the study helps answer a number of key questions.

- o Does the lack of aid influence college persistence?
- o Are scholarships awarded fairly?
- o Does the truly needy student receive a fair share of aid?

It is important to highlight some of the key findings from the first study titled, "Trends in Financial Aid Among Blacks and Non-Blacks in Maryland." This study was conducted by Michael J. Keller, a researcher in the Maryland State Board for Higher Education. One of the most important things this study highlights is the perceived importance of financial aid as viewed from the students who have graduated from Maryland colleges. Data in Table 9 presents these perceptions. It is more than obvious that most black graduates, nearly two-thirds, feel they would not have been able to earn their degrees without financial aid. In comparison, a little more than a third of the non-black students feel the same way. These data seem to confirm the notion that for some students, especially many black undergraduates, financial aid is not viewed as a "luxury" or a "whim." Financial aid is a real need, and without it many black students simply would not be able to complete their undergraduate studies.

TABLE 9
"Would You Have Been Financially Able to Complete Your Degree Without the Financial Aid You Received"

Race	Year	Number	Yes, Without Major Financial Hardship	Yes, With Major Financial Hardship	No
Black	1983	556	12%	25%	64%
	1984	411	14	27	59
	1985	528	12	25	63
Non-black	1983	2,291	32%	32%	36%
	1984	2,680	34	30	36
	1985	3,132	34	29	37

Source: Michael J. Keller. "Trends in Financial Aid Among Blacks and Non-Blacks in Maryland." Paper presented to the 5th Annual NAASSGP/NCHELP Research Network Conference, May 1988.

Data presented in Table 10 detail the average dollar amount of financial aid awarded to black and non-black students over 5 different school years, from 1981 to 1985. Average dollar amounts are shown for all four types of financial aid awarded, grants, loans, scholarships and employment (work-study). When viewing the data in Table 10 one should keep in mind that scholarships and grants are preferred over employment and loans. Studies show that scholarships and grants tend to facilitate undergraduate persistence for minority students[27]. Employment can also facilitate persistence but the employment should be part-time work demanding less than 20 hours a week. Loans, however, may be counterproductive to the persistence of minority students[27].

Keller raises another interesting point about scholarships and grants that should be kept in mind when reviewing the data in Table 10. He states:

> "Grants, or the lack of them, also can affect a student's choice of an institution. Low income students, who have limited funds for college, are restricted in their choice of campuses if they are required to finance their education on their own. As a consequence, white students apparently have a greater choice of public and private colleges than do black and other minority students. Grants address this imbalance by making it easier for financially disadvantaged students to pick from a wider pool of campuses. This, in turn, may increase the prospects that these students will succeed in college. There is substantial evidence suggesting that a student's college choice can have enormous impact on his or her persistence, personal development and employment prospects[28]."

In light of the above, the five year trends reported in Table 10 are disheartening. For black students, over the five year period, the percentage receiving grants declined and the percentage receiving loans increased. For non-black students -- more of them ended up receiving scholarships and there was no decline or increase in the number receiving grants or loans. In fact, overall, the percentage of black students receiving aid declined, from 76 percent to 68 percent, while in contrast, the percentage of non-black students receiving aid increased, from 30 percent to 34 percent. It is important to note, however, that the fewer blacks receiving aid did receive more aid--the average dollar awarded increased 40 percent, from $1,475 to $2,060. We might not want to get too excited when we consider the obvious--black students are probably the group most in need of "more aid/money." And we should definitely not get excited about more black students taking out loans. The Keller study points out the traps associated with the higher loan burden. He states:

"The surveys of baccalaureate recipients at Maryland public campuses have suggested that blacks may face a more difficult time repaying loans because they tend to have higher unemployment rates than non-blacks and those who do find full-time work typically earn less. If black students deliberately avoid snaring themselves in unrealistic debt situations, the fear of borrowing too much can intimidate them into redesigning their educational plans, cutting back on the number of courses taken, and even leaving school altogether[29]."

TABLE 10
5-Year Trend in Student Financial Aid
Black Versus Non-black Students
at Maryland Public Undergraduate Colleges and University

	1981			1985			
	Number of Students	$ Amt	% on Aid	Number of Students	$ Amt	% on Aid	5-Year % Change*
Blacks							
Grants	18,076	$1,011	54%	12,879	$1,440	42%	+42%
Loans	6,344	1,620	19	7,503	1,902	24	+17
Scholarships	6,497	585	20	6,164	769	20	+32
Employment	4,494	1,047	14	3,979	1,200	15	+15
Total**	25,134	$1,047	76%	20,060	$2,060	68%	+40%
Non-blacks							
Grants	15,159	$ 900	11%	16,313	$1,287	11%	+43%
Loans	15,724	2,092	12	17,733	2,075	12	- 1
Scholarships	17,645	463	13	23,674	551	16	+19
Employment	7,217	829	5	7,699	940	9	+13
Totals	40,387	$1,503	30%	49,470	$1,731	34%	+15%

* Represents percent change in dollar amounts.
** Totals are unduplicate counts and reflect students receiving aid from more than one source. In light of this, it should be understood that amounts listed are not totals of the respective columns.

Source: Michael J. Keller. "Trends in Financial Aid Among Blacks and Non-Blacks in Maryland." Paper presented to the 5th Annual NASSGP/NCHELP Research Network Conference. May 1988.

If scholarships are so important in terms of their ability to enhance the persistence of the disadvantaged, especially disadvantaged black students, then why does Maryland handicap its neediest students--the poor? A recent study conducted by The Washington Post sheds a great deal of light on this issue. In reference to Maryland's scholarship programs the study found:

- Scholarships totaling 1.46 million went to 2,094 students who did not qualify as needy.

- While relatively affluent students received money, the state did not assist 2,738 eligible students who needed a total of $12.8 million in financial aid. On average, each applicant needs $4,765 to afford college, and one-third came from families with annual incomes of less then $12,000.

- Only 15 percent of all Maryland scholarship winners attended private colleges or universities. But students at those schools collected 28 percent of the state's scholarship money--more than $4.7 million.

- Black students got relatively small scholarships compared with whites, even though their families had significantly lower incomes. Black students received an average grant of $779, compared with $983 for whites. Yet the average family income of black scholarship winners was $18,239, compared with $28,733 for whites[30].

In terms of why Maryland is leaving the need out in the cold, The Washington Post cites two solid reasons. For one thing, some of Maryland's scholarship programs reside in the hands of state politicians. The study shows that while some legislators consider "need" in the award of scholarships, most are clearly awarding a great deal of scholarship money to affluent students who do not need the aid. The second reason rests with the fact that the system or government agencies responsible for administering the distribution of aid simply does a poor job. The Washington Post study notes that the system operates with "lax procedures, inadequate computers, and insufficient knowledge of how money was being spent."

This state of affairs is truly sad. But it is sadder when you consider two other pieces of information. During the 1980's college tuition increased twice the rate of inflation, and the federal government cut back significantly on the grants awarded to students. So during the 1980's there was a greater need for Maryland to help out those most in need of help. It appears, however, that Maryland turned its back on those students in need of help. It is difficult to say how much these events hurt the college enrollments of blacks or black males. It is fair to say, however, that these events did not enhance the entry of blacks into college nor did they enhance the persistence of black undergraduates.

PART TWO

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Summary: Although the focus of the Task Force study was to involve itself in the decline of the African-American male in entering and completing college, it became evident early in the life of the Task Force that the success or failure in the education of the black student does not begin and end in college.

The eventual school success of black students obviously begins in the home, and continues in the school.

It was the decision of the Task Force to look at the school life of the black student, in its incremental phase (k-12), in order to properly examine and understand how public school experiences provide the motivation, or lack of motivation, for black students to plan for and enter college life.

The following observations are related to these discussions and to an examination of the issues raised in Task Force dialogues.

Education for children at risk is not improving quickly enough. Black males are still at the bottom of the scale when it comes to academic achievement and college enrollment and graduation. Still more black and other non-Asian minorities are constantly being placed in special education classes than majority groups. While children from majority groups are being placed in academic areas such as advanced science and math courses that prepare them for college placement in competitive institutions, minority children are being placed in remedial and vocational courses. The pattern follows in that many minority children are often labeled as learning disabled or emotionally disturbed and placed in special education classes where they are never to be mainstreamed again.

The end result of the educational plight of minority students is that they eventually rate low in employability, socio-economic status, and educational attainment. Low achieving students stand a better chance of being a social and financial burden to society than those who are academically successful. In 1983, when A Nation at Risk told us that our schools were being overtaken by "a rising tide of mediocrity" states made an effort to remedy the situation by increasing high school graduation requirements with proficiency tests and invoking higher standards in math/science courses. Such remedies, to say the least, did not work. The time has come for us to place appropriate focus on an area in education that has, to date, received little attention. Current thrusts toward improving academic performance are not focusing on elementary education, an area where the need exists for extensive research, professional development, and newfound concentration by education reformers.

Longitudinal studies in elementary education are practically nonexistent. The National Center for Educational Statistics designed a longitudinal survey known as NELS 88. Researchers at the Center for Effective Elementary and Middle Schools at Johns Hopkins University made plans to conduct analyses when data sets became available, but the Department of Education's Office of Education, Research and Improvement did not include the mission for elementary and middle schools in the latest recompetition of federally-funded National Research Centers. However, some research does exist in the area of early childhood education programs. The Perry Preschool Program in Ypsilanti, Michigan is distinctive because it has evaluated former participants over a long period of time. The study takes 123 students who participated in the program between 1962 and 1967 and evaluates their progress as young adults. The study found that students who participated in the preschool program had greater school success along with higher achievement test scores, higher grade point averages, and lower numbers of failing marks. They also had a high rate of high school graduation along with a higher commitment to schooling than that of a control group. The Ypsilanti participants were found to have less involvement with the legal system and less antisocial behavior and misconduct. Overall, the Ypsilanti participants ended up being less of a cost to society than the members of a randomly selected control group.

Although research on the significance of the elementary years is limited, current developments have led to the conclusion that the elementary years are incremental to a child's successful transition into middle school and senior high school. This means of course that the elementary years have long term effects on a child's overall success academically, socially, and economically. In order to understand this idea, the general capabilities that most youngsters possess upon entering elementary school must be examined. Research shows that during the early years a child's teachers and instructors can successfully capture and develop a self-esteem, enthusiasm and willingness to learn. Also, upon entering elementary school, a child has developed basic language capabilities and social skills that are prerequisite to obtaining future academic achievement. Overall, the attitudes and aptitude levels that are developed at an early age have long term effects on academic accomplishment and employability. We first must focus on the fact that it is in elementary school that either positive or negative attitudes are first cultivated.

A Montgomery County Public Schools study on math achievement among females and ethnic minorities exemplifies the effects of attitudes developed during the early years. One of the goals of the study was to identify at what points, if any, in the educational process differences appear in the mathematics participation and performance of females compared to males, and blacks and Hispanics compared to Asians and whites, and to describe these differences. The study found that differences in the performance of blacks and Hispanics compared to whites and Asians emerge very early in elementary school and persist throughout the educational histories of the students.

The study attributes a large portion of these differences to the early development of attitudes and beliefs about mathematics. Attitudes, classroom participation, and test performance appeared to be highly related. Students who performed at higher levels in the curriculum felt less anxious, liked mathematics better, and saw a greater use for

mathematics than did students who performed at lower levels. These findings lead to the following conclusion: attitudes influence students' ability or willingness to perform in the curriculum, and performance and participation in the curriculum ultimately influence students' mathematics achievement. Evidence from this study indicates that by the end of second grade, black and Hispanic students tend to fall below grade level in the mastery of curriculum objectives more than Asian and white students. The study also suggests that once a student falls below the standard level of performance in the curriculum for his/her grade level, he/she is not likely to catch up to that grade level standard of performance. Low performing students, therefore, are likely to develop negative attitudes during the early elementary years. Such attitudes may not be due to low performance only. We must consider family effects on a student's incentive to do well as well as teacher performance, expectation and the cumulative nature of basic skills development.

Instead of attempting to develop totally new programs in elementary schools, some amount of research must be dedicated to discovering what already works in elementary education. Effective Elementary School programs have proven to be successful. Effective school programs usually concentrate on either providing compensatory education services outside the classroom to at risk students or through classroom instructional programs that are effective for all students. Since the most economical and efficient method would be through comprehensive classroom instructional programs that work for all students, much research is focused in this area. Research based on the effects on effective in class elementary programs has found three types to show convincing evidence of effectiveness. They are continuous progress programs, individualized instruction programs, and effective cooperative learning programs.

Another school that works was created in New Haven. James Comer developed a program that addresses underlying developmental and social issues. Strong bonds were created between the school and home by conducting activities that promoted psychological development in students and parents and by creating governance and management reams that consisted of parents, teachers, mental health specialists and a member of the nonprofessional staff. The New Haven program focused on a child's overall development and forced teachers and school staff to embrace new ways of thinking. This program produced significant academic gains: students who had once ranked lowest in achievement had caught up to grade level by fourth grade.

Several other successful intervention programs have been developed to encourage an interest in and preparation for secondary and postsecondary education at an early age. Successful programs respond and adapt to situations particular to their locale. In a study "Certainty of Opportunity", the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) reports that the success of a program depends largely on factors such as financial support, local enthusiasm, leadership and dissemination of research. Another characteristic of successful programs is parent and guardian involvement. Educators should be made aware of successful parent involvement programs. NASFAA stresses the extreme importance of early intervention, instead of intervention at the secondary levels. For the student who is not at risk, a normal flow of events may involve (1) demonstrating an interest in college by taking requisite courses, showing evidence of learning through grade and test scores, (2) college admission, and (3) successful transition

into the work place. This sequence of events may not occur naturally for the at risk student. An at risk student may make the decision at age 11 to drop out of school at age 16 because he has already psychologically dropped out of school due to lack of aspiration and motivation. Intervention should begin in the elementary years and should focus on levels of aspiration and motivation, interest in planning for the future and willingness to participate in activities that lead to increased knowledge of educational and career options. The NASFAA study suggests that a child's outcome in high school should reflect the compounded effects of interventions that began at least six years earlier. Intervention should continue through college and should be reflected in career choices and job placements. The key is early intervention before irreparable experiences occur.

SURVEY FINDINGS

SUMMARY: The Task Force formulated and administered a special questionnaire to corroborate and update the data the Maryland State Department of Education gathers on postgraduation plans of Maryland students. Items were selected from Monitoring the Future; Questionnaire Responses from the Nation's High School Seniors by Lloyd B. Johnson, Jerald G. Bachman and Patrick M. O'Malley.

Four Maryland school districts were invited to participate in the survey, two districts participated. The questionnaire was administered to randomly selected intact classes within the representative schools. Both sexes and all ethnic groups were included in the survey. Two age groups were surveyed: (1) students expecting to graduate in 1990; and (2) students expecting to graduate in 1992-1993. Nearly 1,000 students were included in the sample; 866 from Baltimore City Public Schools, and 89 from Montgomery County Public Schools.

An analysis of the data revealed that the sample (those returning completed questionnaires) may not be representative of the population spectrum from which it was drawn. Therefore, no independent conclusions have been drawn nor have recommendations been made on this limited sample. However, data that support trends from existing statewide statistics are presented below. The Task Force recommends that the NAACP extend the term of the Task Force at least six months to allow time to collect and analyze additional data from a statewide sample and report the findings.

Education

Nearly one fourth (23.4 percent) of the black males responding to the Task Force survey item on attitude toward school indicated that they like school "very much". Only black

female students indicated that they like school "very much" at a level similar to black males (24.0 percent).

Of the non-black males only 5.9 percent responded that they like school "very much" and 13.9 percent of non-black females chose the same response.

Black students in general and black males particularly in the largest percentages reported positive feelings about their courses; 12.9 percent of the black males responding indicated that courses are "very exciting". This compares to 9.2 percent black females, 5.7 percent black non-black males and only 2.5 percent of the non-black females.

It is interesting to note, however, that black students report earning lower grades than whites even though they are more likely to report that classes are very exciting and that they like school very much.

Black males expect that they "definitely will" attend a technical or vocational school in percentages twice as great (12.1 percent) as black females (6.4) and non-black males (5.7 percent). An even greater disparity is noted in the expectations of non-black females who selected "definitely will" at only 2.5 percent.

Black males also differ from all other classmates in their expectations regarding military service. While 15.4 percent of black males responding indicated that they "definitely will" serve in the Armed Forces only 8.5 percent of non-black males, 7.6 percent of non-black females, and 5.4 percent of black females have definite plans to serve in the Armed Forces.

Aspirations and Education

A close examination of the data regarding graduate or professional school again reveals that black males have lower aspirations than do their classmates. Black males respond at a 17.9 percent rate that they "definitely won't go" on to graduate or professional school. By contrast, the same response was given by 12.7 percent of black females, 12.4 percent of non-black females, and only 5.9 percent of non-black males. When the responses "probably will" and "definitely will" are combined the results are even more disparate. The two responses total 54.7 percent for the black male, 64.7 percent for the non-black male, 66.2 percent for the non-black females and a high of 68.2 percent for black females.

Self-Concept

The data on education and aspiration is very interesting. It reveals that black males are more likely to have lower aspirations for pursuing advanced degrees and higher expectation that they will get a technical/vocational postsecondary education. However, an examination of data on self-esteem reveals a more positive self-concept among black males than any other group in the sample. For example, the percentage of black males who agree that they have a positive attitude towards themselves is 62.2 percent, with the next highest percentage being black females at 52.8 percent.

Counseling

Non-black students report that they see counselors "about often enough" (48.6 percent non-black males, 40.3 percent non-black females, 31.3 percent black males and 29.8 percent black females). Conversely, the black students who would like to see a counselor "much more often" is significantly larger than their non-black classmates (20.2 percent black males, 23.5 percent black females, 16.0 percent non-black females and only 5.7 percent non-black males). Black and non-black students do not differ significantly in reporting helpfulness of counselors when they do meet with them.

When compared to non-blacks, a higher percentage of black students want to discuss classes "much more" (27.7 percent black males, 31.6 percent black females, 20.6 percent non-black males and 25 percent non-black females) and the military "much less" (36 percent black males, 51.9 percent black females, 20.6 percent non-black males and 36 percent non-black females). Forty-seven percent of non-black males as compared to only 23.4 percent of the black males responding reported that counselors discussed the military about the right amount of time.

When discussing black and non-black students responses to the time counselors spent discussing college/education or career plans, black students need much more assistance than they receive. On the subject of college/education the following percentages were reported: wanting much more discussion, black males 35 percent, black females 40.9 percent, non-black males 23.5 percent, and non-black females 26.8 percent. Reports on career plans revealed the following percentages of students who preferred much more discussion (black males 43.4 percent, black females 52.2 percent, non-black males 26.5 percent, and non-black females 32.5 percent).

TOWN MEETING: INTERACTIVE GROUPS

The Task Force convened four focus groups consisting of adolescent and young adult Black males and parents. The objective of the sessions was to determine and explore community and institutional barriers and to gain personal perspectives on factors contributing to the declining enrollment and graduation of the black male from institutions of higher education.

Participants, ages 15 and above, were recommended by guidance counselors, community leaders, public agencies, and Task Force members. The group consisted of a cross-section of socio-economic and educational achievement levels. High school and college drop outs, college students, college graduates and parents in small group settings provided elaborate explanations of factors, conditions and influences that they view as having a negative impact on education of the black male.

The focus groups were facilitated by successful black male role models from the professional community, military, religious community, and the public service sector. Each group was asked to respond to a series of questions developed by the Task Force in selected, yet broad areas. The groups were permitted to digress into free association discussions as deemed appropriate by group leaders and facilitators explored four broad topic areas.

(1) The principle role of the student, parent, educator and the religious community in the educational development of the Black male.

(2) Barriers that may significantly interfere with education of the black male.

(3) The impact of educational climate and school environment on education of the black male.

(4) Recommendations to improve enrollment, retention and graduation of the black male.

A common concern identified by each group was that too little attention has been given to research and/or solicitation of personal opinion of blacks on the plight of the black male. Participants expressed that the black male is often written about but seldom utilized to in the collection of such data. The free discussions elicited opinions in many areas. These comments have been summarized into several topic areas.

The Principle Role of The Student in the Educational Development of the Black Male

- o To obtain the best education possible;
- o To accomplish all assignments and surpass all expectations;
- o To commit to excellence in all educational endeavors;
- o To complete the discipline and achieve graduation status;
- o To develop appropriate leadership skills.

The Principle Role of the Parent in Educating the Black Male

- o To provide encouragement, appropriate counsel and broad-based support;
- o To provide necessary educational and financial resources;
- o To maintain involvement with teacher and other support groups;
- o To encourage and reinforce positive values;
- o To guide the student toward sound choices;
- o To establish high, yet reasonable expectations;
- o To emphasize the importance of education; and
- o To acquaint students with elements of peer pressure.

The Principle Role of the Educator in Educating the Black Male

- o To be dedicated to the principles of excellence in education;
- o To teach and develop all students to their fullest potential;
- o To care, share experiences, solicit and encourage opinions;
- o To work closely with parents on establishing student expectations; and

- o To recognize the individual worth of each student, to meet him at his level of potential and accomplishment, and to work diligently to improve his knowledge, skills and abilities.

The Principle Role of the Religious Community in Educating the Black Male

- o To espouse, develop, and clarify values;
- o To support students and parents in the development of strong morals;
- o To help the student understand how to make appropriate life choices.

Barriers that Affect Educating the Black Male

- o Peer pressure;
- o Limited financial and educational resources;
- o Poor self-discipline and/and time management;
- o Poor study skills;
- o Inadequate educational preparation in early school years;
- o Lure of illegal opportunities that produce easy and quick money;
- o Increased spread of drugs and violence; and
- o Negative media stereotypes of the black male.

Impact of Educational Climate on Development of the Black Male

- o Negative stereotypes contribute significantly to a black male self-perception as a detrimental influence in the educational setting;
- o Perception of being disproportionately channelled into special education programs and singled out for harsh disciplinary treatment; and

- o High black male suspension rates contribute to low self-esteem, and low performance expectations.

Factors and Institutions that Influence and Affect the Black Male

- o Parents and Family. The mother was listed as a great positive influence. Significant and appropriate investment of the father's time has a significant positive influence toward altering or steering the male student in the proper direction;

- o The Church. The church was cited as a reservoir of strength, a sense of stability, and a place to find focus. Students, in particular, related that the church has rallied to address the growing dilemma facing the black male in American society and its potential for disintegration of the black family.

- o Needs of the black male are different from the black female. The males indicated that American society has demonstrated a much greater acceptance of the black female. Accordingly, the black male senses a need for greater coping skills and more strength to effectively maneuver in American society.

Recommendations

(1) The church should move to the forefront of the war against drugs and the effort to keep the black male in school.

(2) Parents must be persistent in establishing and reinforcing values

(3) Greater emphasis must be placed on teaching the black male coping skills, goal setting, and how to effectively deal with peer pressure.

(4) The black male must be made to understand, at an early age, the consequences of easy money gained through illegal activities.

(5) State and federal dollars must be available to assist students from low income families with tuition and other personal needs to stay in college.

(6) More financial aid workshops and seminars should be available through the school, fraternal and religious organizations

(7) The school curriculum should include and teach multi-ethnic cultures and history.

(8) Greater emphasis should be placed on educator sensitivity awareness training.

(9) Black organizations should highlight black contributions and develop mentoring programs in schools, churches and other community settings.

(10) The educational community must raise its performance expectations of the black male.

(11) The educational sector must work in closer partnership with the student, parent and community.

(12) The educational sector must identify and eliminate institutional and systemic racial barriers that serve as barriers to education of the black male.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND EFFORTS IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND

It would be wrong for the Task Force to leave the reader with the impression that Marylanders are doing nothing to enhance the postsecondary education of black males, or the disadvantaged. There are a few noteworthy programs/efforts currently operating that must be highlighted.

Black Men in Science

Perhaps the most exciting program in the state, one designed specifically for black men, recently got started at the University of Maryland at Baltimore County (UMBC). The aim of this program is to increase the number of Maryland black men who complete undergraduate and ultimately, doctoral or professional programs in science and technology. The program is being supported by a $522,000 grant from the Robert and Jane Meyerhoff Foundation. Scholars take part in the following:

- summer programs that enrich academics (all 4 years);
- summer and year long stipends (all 4 years);
- paid tuition, fees and room and board (all 4 years);
- free use of computers; and
- interface with black male professional mentors.

The first class of Meyerhoff scholars, 20 black men all from the state of Maryland, entered the UMBC this past summer as full-time freshmen. The state-wide competition for the scholarships generated 320 applications from black males across the state. Officials at UMBC note that this number of black male applicants is about three times higher than normal. UMBC has recently decided to seek funds to support another class of scholars.

Baltimore's Partnership Program

Four years ago, Boston businesses, with contributions that exceeded $5 million, established the Access Program to help low income students from the city's public schools attend college. Access guarantees that any public school graduate with a C average who is accepted to college will receive financial aid to attend. During its first year, Access supported 99 students. Four years later, nearly 80 percent of the students had either graduated from college or were near graduation. Earlier, it was noted that typically only 50 percent of the students who enter as freshmen graduate from college. The Access Program has exceeded this standard.[28]

Last year, the city of Baltimore kicked-off an effort similar to the Access Program. Baltimore's program, called The Baltimore Commonwealth, is a unique partnership between businesses, government and the public schools. The commonwealth program hopes to raise $25 million to support its efforts. These efforts include assisting potential college students with college prep exams, application fees, counseling and mentoring, and last dollar gap financing. The Commonwealth Program will also undertake efforts to improve Baltimore's high school dropout rate. During the 1985-86 school year, more than 7,500 students dropped out of the Baltimore City public schools.[29] It is far too early to commitment on the success of the commonwealth program, but outcomes similar to those of Access would certainly raise the number of black college graduates in Maryland.

Improving the Transfer Rate at Montgomery College

Nearly half of the black students who enter college do so through a two-year college. The low costs associated with attending a two-year college probably has a lot to do with the high number of blacks entering two-year schools. But most blacks who enter two-year colleges drop out of school, and very few transfer to a four-year college. Montgomery College in Rockville hopes that a newly created program for black students can prevent them from dropping out and increase their transfer rates to four-year colleges. These efforts are being supported by a $50,000 grant from the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

The Montgomery College program consists of two efforts, a two week summer institute for 50 students, and a year long academic support program for all black students in the sciences. The summer institute is an academic enrichment and counseling program aimed at helping entering freshmen make a smooth transition to college life. The year long program is an integrated support program. Participating students receive special advising, skill development and personal counseling.

Prince George's Community College "College Success Program"

The College Success Program at Prince George's Community College, funded by the State of Maryland, is aimed particularly at African-American males. Special mentors and tutors to assist in the improvement of study skills are assigned to each of the 50 or more African-American men currently enrolled in the program.

AFTERWORD

This report is the collaborative effort of a select Blue Ribbon Task Force appointed by the Montgomery County Maryland Branch of the NAACP, to review the problem -- and offer recommendations -- relating to the declining enrollment and graduation of African-American males from institutions of higher education in Maryland colleges and universities. The reason for undertaking this extensive project was to determine how well African-American males are being served by higher education in the State of Maryland. Intuitive feelings and vague assumptions were no longer sufficient; it was important to get the facts.

The Task Force believes it has the facts....and they paint a dismal picture. They indicate that African-American males have been, are now, and unless radical changes are made, quite likely will continue to be seriously underrepresented in Maryland higher education. The low level of participation of that population in higher education, and especially their graduation from college, has real cost for the individuals affected, as well as the state and indeed, the nation.

This report outlines a number of serious challenges and likewise a number of unique opportunities. Indeed, the study findings led to recommendations which the Task Force hopes will be diligently pursued by governments, public institutions, private organizations and individuals. Failure to change existing customs and practices will penalize future development in our communities and erode our competitiveness and productivity.

No segment of our state, or nation for that matter, will be unaffected by the heavy burden of an undereducated and underutilized segment of our population represented by African-American men. There is a role for all of us in this matter. It is important to recognize that the problems in the education of the African-American male begins at the inception of that education and is incremental in the process....beginning with the public school experience and continuing through the college experience.

There is good reason to expeditiously change the way higher education opportunities are provided and allocated in the State of Maryland. Nothing less than our future is at stake.

Endnotes

1. The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Survey on Trends in Minority Enrollment in Higher Education. April 1988, page 4.

2. Ibid.

3. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of Population. General Population Characteristics. Vol. 1, Chapter B. page 127.

4. Ibid.

5. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Higher Education General Information Survey, April 1988. page 19-20.

6. James R. Wetzel, American Youth: A Statistical Snapshot. Washington, D.C.: William T. Grant Foundation, 1989, page 1.

7. Maryland State Department of Education. Public School Enrollment: State of Maryland. Baltimore: Office of Management Information systems, September, 1988, Table 3.

8. Maryland State Department of Education. Enrollment by Race/Ethnic Categories: Maryland Public Schools. Baltimore: Office of Management Information Systems, September, 1988, Table 2.

9. Reginald Wilson and Deborah H. Carter. Minorities in Higher Education: 7th Annual Status Report. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1988, page 6.

10. U.S. Department of Education. Trends in Minority Enrollment in Higher Education. Fall 1976-Fall 1986. Washington. D.C.: Center for Education Statistics, April 1988, page 16.

11. Children's Defense Fund. Black and White Children in America: Key Facts. Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 1985, pages 135-139.

12. Wilson and Carter, op cit, page 11.

13. Department of Economic and Community Development. Maryland Statistical Abstract 1986-87. Annapolis: Department of Economic and Community Development, December 1985, page 36.

14. Wilson and Carter, op cit, page 11

15. "Study finds no Competition for Graduates between the Military and Higher Education," Education Week, December 7, 1988, page 8

16. Michele N-K Collison, "More Young Black Men Choosing not to go to College," The Chronicle of Higher Education. December 9, 1987, page A-26.

17. State Board of Higher Education. The Enrollment of Black Students in Maryland Institutions of Higher Education. Annapolis: State Board of Higher Education, April 1988.

18. Wilson and Carter, op cit, page 24.

19. "Report Documents Minority Dropout Rate in Two-year Vocational Ed Programs," Black Issues in Higher Education. October 12, 1989, page 6.

20. Ibid.

21. State Board for Higher Education. Status of Community College First-time, Full-time Freshmen Three Years After First Enrollment. Annapolis, State Board for Higher Education, May 1988.

22. David E. Lavin, Richard D. Alba and Richard A. Silberstein. "Open Admissions and Equal Access: A study of Ethnic Groups in City University of New York." Harvard Educational Review. February 1979, pages 58-59.

23. Alexander W. Astin. Minorities in American Higher Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1982.

24. Alexander W. Astin. Minorities in American Higher Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1982.

25. "High-Ability Minority Students Show Equal or Greater Persistence in Pursuing Science Careers Than Their White Counterparts." National Science Foundation News, January 13, 1989.

26. Denise K. Magner. "Young People Found Widely Misinformed About Cost of 21 College." The Chronicle of Higher Education. October 12, 1988, pages 1, A-34, A-35.

27. Michele N-K Collison. "Complex Application Form Discourages Many Students From Applying for Federal Financial Aid." The Chronicle of Higher Education, July 8, 1988, pages A-19, A-30.

28. Thomas G. Mortenson. Attitudes of Americans Toward Borrowing to Finance Education Expenses, 1959-1983. Iowa City: The American College Testing Program, 1988, page 14.

29. Astin, op cit, pages 107-108.

30. Michael J. Keller. "Trends in Financial Aid Among Blacks and Non-Blacks in Maryland." Paper presented to the 5th Annual NASSGP/NCHELP Research Network Conference, May 1988, page 8.

END

U.S. Dept. of Education

Office of Education
Research and
Improvement (OERI)

ERIC

Date Filmed

March 29, 1991